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**Making sense of the world**

**THE BEST MAGAZINE FOR CURIOUS KIDS**

# THE WEEK Junior

## FAREWELL TO A PRESIDENT

Nation honors Jimmy Carter, the 39th US President, after his death at age 100 **p2**

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Jimmy Carter was elected in 1976 and served one four-year term.
- After leaving office, he devoted his life to humanitarian work.
- He was the longest-living former President in US history.





# This week's big news

## IN HIS WORDS

"Every human being has within himself or herself a desire to reach out to others and to share some of our blessings with those who are in need."  
—Jimmy Carter



Former President Jimmy Carter in 2016

## Carter's namesakes



One of the busiest roads in Atlanta is named Jimmy Carter Boulevard, in honor of the former President. There is also a Navy submarine named the USS Jimmy Carter, Jimmy Carter Middle School in New Mexico, and a fish species with the scientific name *Etheostoma jimmycarter*, among many other tributes.

# Nation honors 39th President

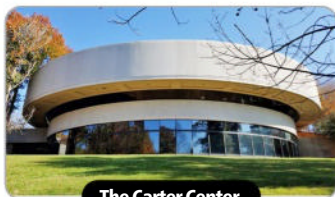
Jimmy Carter, who served as US President from 1977 to 1981 and later became a champion of human rights and peace, died on December 29 at age 100. Carter, a Democrat, was the nation's longest-living former President.

## What were his early years like?

James Earl Carter Jr. was born on October 1, 1924, in the small town of Plains, Georgia. His parents operated a peanut farm and store, and he grew up in a home without electricity or indoor plumbing. After graduating first in his high school class, Carter attended the US Naval Academy, graduating in 1946. He married Rosalynn Smith, who was also from Plains, in 1946, and the couple had four children. He served for seven years in the Navy before returning to Plains to manage the family farm.

## How did he reach the White House?

Carter began his political career at the local level, serving on civic boards before winning a seat in the Georgia state senate. He lost a bid for governor in 1966 but ran again in 1970 and won. In that position, he earned acclaim for his focus on protecting the environment and ending racial segregation. In 1976, he ran for President and defeated Gerald Ford, a Republican who then held the office.



The Carter Center in Atlanta, Georgia

## What did he achieve as President?

Among his accomplishments in the US, Carter created the Department of Education, protected 103 million acres of Alaskan wilderness, and appointed record numbers of women and people of color to government jobs. Internationally, he led a historic peace agreement between Israel and Egypt, established diplomatic relations with China, and negotiated a treaty over the Panama Canal. He was criticized, however, for the nation's soaring unemployment and the high prices of goods and services. He also faced a crisis that began in 1979, when 52 American staff members were taken hostage at the US embassy in Iran.

They were held captive for 444 days, while Carter and his administration tried to negotiate their release.

Many Americans blamed Carter for not getting the hostages out sooner—a major factor in his loss to

Ronald Reagan in the 1980 election.

The hostages were set free on January 20, 1981, the day Reagan was sworn in as President.

## What happened after Carter left office?

After the Presidency, Carter returned to Georgia and dedicated himself to humanitarian work, which he continued into his 90s. In 1982, he and

Rosalynn created the Carter Center, a nonprofit focused on human rights, democracy, health, and peace around the world. Among its achievements, the center helped to nearly eliminate guinea worm disease in Africa and Asia. In 1986, the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum opened in Atlanta. In 2002, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for what the committee called his efforts "to find peaceful solutions to international conflicts, to advance democracy and human rights, and to promote economic and social development." For nearly 40 years, he volunteered with Habitat for Humanity, an organization that builds homes for people who need them. The former President worked on more than 4,400 houses, wielding a hammer and pounding nails himself. Carter also taught Sunday school at a church in Plains and wrote 32 books on a wide range of topics.

## What will his legacy be?

Carter will be remembered for his work on behalf of humanity, his 77-year marriage to Rosalynn, who died in 2023, and his personal traits of perseverance, kindness, and humility. His son Chip said, "He taught us the value of hard work, the importance of community, and the power of love. We'll carry that forward." In 2014, Carter discussed his own legacy with *USA Today*. "Human rights and peace are the two things I'd like to be remembered for—as well as being a good grandfather," he said.





## Funeral services in Georgia and DC

Six days of official services for former President Jimmy Carter began on January 4 in Georgia. A hearse carrying his casket traveled through his hometown of Plains, paused at his family farm, and headed to the Carter Center in Atlanta, where he lay in state for several days. In this tradition, a casket is displayed so the public can walk by to pay their respects. More than 23,000 people did so for Carter.

On January 7, Carter was flown to Washington, DC, for military honors at the US Navy Memorial. Next, a horse-drawn carriage took him to the US Capitol where, after a service attended by top government officials, Carter began two days of lying in state. Thousands of visitors were expected.

When *The Week Junior* went to press on January 7, a formal funeral was scheduled for January 9 at Washington National Cathedral. President Joe Biden was set to speak, and the four other living Presidents and many world leaders planned to attend. Federal offices were ordered closed for a national day of mourning. Carter will return to Plains to be buried next to his wife, Rosalynn.



Carter's casket is draped with an American flag.



A handmade memorial to Jimmy Carter in Georgia

**HEARTFELT GRATITUDE**  
Jimmy Carter's "long life of selfless service to humanity has left a lasting mark on us and on the world."  
—The Carter Center staff

## Tributes pour in for Carter

Leaders from across the US and the world, as well as everyday citizens, paid tribute to former US President Jimmy Carter after his death, praising his strength of character and life of public service.

"Carter's leadership contributed significantly to international peace and security," said António Guterres, head of the United Nations. Pope Francis, leader of the Catholic Church, recalled Carter's "firm commitment...to reconciliation and peace between peoples, the defense of human rights, and the welfare of the poor and those in need."

US President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill Biden said Carter was "a man of great character and courage, hope, and optimism." Former President George W. Bush described Carter's humanitarian work as "an example of service that will inspire Americans for generations."

Tributes to Carter were seen outside the Atlanta, Georgia, headquarters of the Carter Center, where people left flowers, cards, and bags of peanuts, a symbol of Carter's humble beginnings as a peanut farmer. Across the US, Habitat for Humanity chapters invited people to write messages for Carter on special doors, to symbolize the doors of opportunity his work with the organization opened for others.

As Carter's funeral procession made its way through Georgia (see story at left), people lined the streets and stood on highway overpasses to pay their respects. Among them was London Wollenweber, age 17, who drove 12 hours from Illinois to be there. He said of Carter, "When we look back at all the former Presidents in American history, he's the one [who] truly stands out."



## IT'S AN AMAZING WEEK FOR...

### A FAVORITE RECIPE

Interest in Jimmy Carter's favorite dessert—his wife's peanut butter pie, which she made for family gatherings—has increased since his death. You can find a version of her recipe at [tinyurl.com/TWJUS-PeanutButterPie](https://tinyurl.com/TWJUS-PeanutButterPie).



The collector

### A HISTORICAL COLLECTION

College student Caden Maire started collecting old campaign pins as a child in Wisconsin. Now he has more than 500 pins from Jimmy Carter's Presidential campaign and political career. Calling it a tribute to Carter, Maire said his collection "gives a glimpse into the past."

### THE VOLUNTEER SPIRIT

In 1984, the Carters led a group of Habitat for Humanity volunteers in building homes for 19 New York families. This effort became the Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter Work Project, which takes place in a different city each year. The Carters participated until 2019, and the next project will be held in October in Austin, Texas.

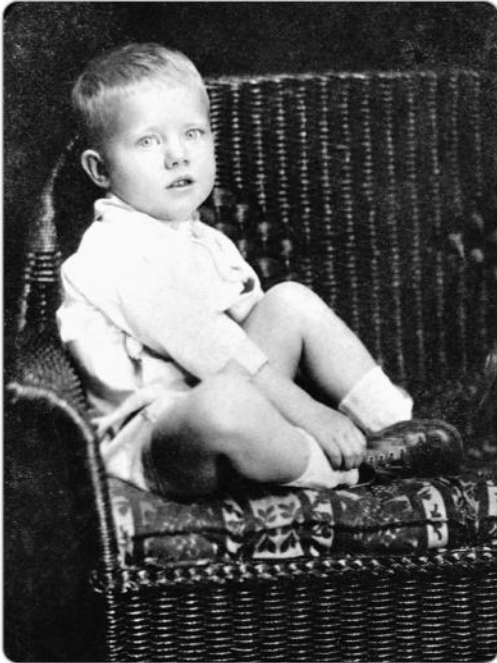


Volunteers at work

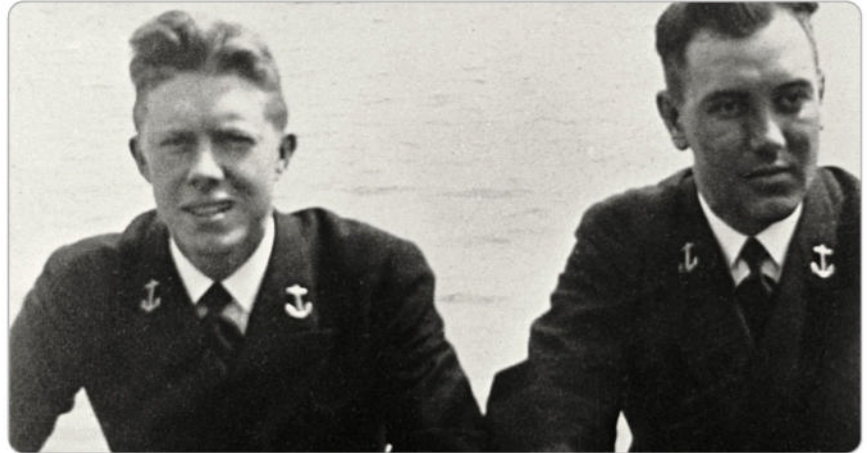




# Jimmy Carter: A life in photos



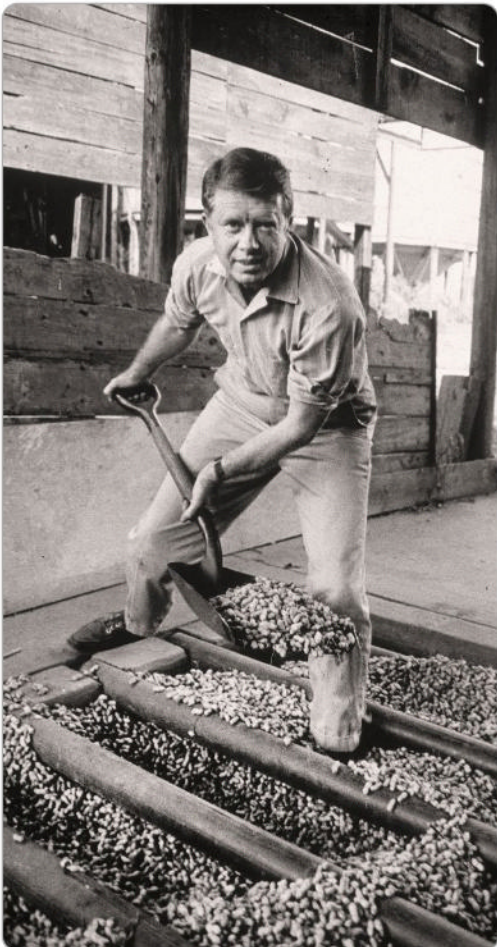
▲ Jimmy Carter as a young boy in the 1920s



▲ Carter (left, with a fellow cadet) was the only President to graduate from the US Naval Academy.



▲ Rosalynn Smith and Jimmy Carter, shown on their wedding day in 1946, were the longest-married Presidential couple in US history. "Rosalynn was my equal partner in everything I ever accomplished," he said.



▲ Shoveling peanuts on his family's farm in the 1970s



▲ The Carter family included three sons, Jack, Jeff, and Chip (back row, left to right with Jimmy); a daughter, Amy (front, to the right of Rosalynn); and 22 grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



# Jimmy Carter: A life in photos



▲ The 39th President takes the oath of office in 1977.



▲ The famous handshake between Egyptian President Anwar Sadat (left), Carter, and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin (right) in 1979, after the signing of a historic peace treaty between Egypt and Israel



▲ Carter was a founding member of The Elders with other global leaders, including Nelson Mandela of South Africa (seated). They shared a mission to work together for peace, justice, and human rights.



▲ At a ceremony in Norway, he was awarded the 2002 Nobel Peace Prize "for his decades of untiring effort."



▲ Working at a Habitat for Humanity building site



▲ A rare photograph, taken in the Oval Office at the White House in 2009, captures five US Presidents (left to right): George H.W. Bush, Barack Obama, George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and Jimmy Carter.





## FUN FACT

In the 119th Congress, there are five lawmakers each with the last names of Moore, Johnson, Scott, and Smith.



A view of the Capitol building, where Congress meets in Washington, DC

## Senator makes history



Tim Scott (above) has become the longest-serving Black member of the US Senate. The Republican from South Carolina was appointed to a seat in 2013 and has been re-elected three times. He is one of five Black lawmakers in the Senate, the most to serve at the same time.

# Congress opens 119th session

The US Congress, the branch of government that makes laws and consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives, began work on January 3. New members were sworn in, and leaders were elected for the two-year session, which will end in January 2027.

## What happened?

In the Senate, 34 of the 100 members were newly elected or had been re-elected in November to a six-year term. They were sworn in by Vice President Kamala Harris, who serves as President of the Senate. The new Senate is made up of 53 Republicans and 47 lawmakers who are either Democrats or Independents who vote with the Democrats. This marks a shift in control from the previous session, when Senate Democrats had

more seats. In the House, 434 representatives took their oath of office to serve a two-year term. There are 219 Republicans and 215 Democrats in the House, compared to 222 Republicans and 213 Democrats when the previous Congress convened in January 2023.

## Who are the leaders?

John Thune, a Republican from South Dakota, was chosen as the new Senate Majority Leader (the top leader of that chamber). Chuck Schumer, the Democrat from New York who previously held that position, will now be the Senate Minority Leader. Republican Mike Johnson of Louisiana was narrowly re-elected Speaker of the House (that chamber's top position). Two Republicans initially refused to support Johnson, which would

have prevented him from receiving enough votes to be elected. But they reversed course and Johnson prevailed by a vote of 219–215. Hakeem Jeffries of New York will continue in his position as leader of the House Democrats.

## What happened on January 6?

Members of the House and Senate convened in a joint session of Congress to certify Donald Trump's victory in the Presidential election. Harris, who lost to Trump, oversaw the certification, which proceeded smoothly and without incident. Security was sharply increased due to the attack on the Capitol that took place on January 6, 2021. On that day, hundreds of people violently broke into the building in an attempt to prevent Joe Biden from being certified as the winner of the 2020 election.



## WORD OF THE WEEK

### BIOLUMINESCENCE

Although humans can't create their own light, some animals and plants can, due to a process known as "bioluminescence." The word is made up of the Greek *bios*, meaning "life," and the Latin *lumen*, which means "light."



## THE WEEK IN HISTORY

### January 8, 1975

Connecticut governor takes office

On January 8, 1975, Ella Grasso took office as governor of Connecticut. She was the first woman to be elected governor of a state. Previous female governors had taken over the role from their husbands. Before becoming governor, Grasso served in the US House of Representatives (one half of Congress) and worked as a speechwriter and a state legislator.



Ella Grasso





## Wages increase in 21 states

In 21 states across the US, new laws have gone into effect that increase the minimum wage, benefiting about 9.2 million workers. (A minimum wage is the lowest amount an employer can pay an employee.) Washington will provide the highest minimum wage of \$16.66 per hour, followed by California and New York, where the new rate will be \$16.50 an hour. Washington, DC, and 10 states increased their minimum wage to at least \$15 an hour.



## Bans on plastic foam containers

California and Oregon have joined at least eight other states in banning the use of most polystyrene foam food containers. Polystyrene is a type of plastic that breaks into small pieces and can take hundreds of years to break down. Since California has the world's fifth-largest economy, eliminating polystyrene there could have a powerful impact on helping the environment, officials said.



A Danish-Swedish Farmdog

## New dog breed is recognized

The Danish-Swedish Farmdog is the 202nd breed to be recognized by the American Kennel Club (AKC), the world's largest purebred dog registry. The small herding dog, which weighs 15 to 20 pounds and has black and tan markings, can now compete in AKC events, such as the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show. It is known as the "little big dog" for its enthusiasm in helping herd livestock.



# Medals of Freedom are awarded

President Joe Biden awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom to 19 people at a White House ceremony on January 4.

The recipients were honored for their extraordinary contributions to the nation or the world. Chef José Andrés was recognized for his work with the organization he founded, World Central Kitchen, which distributes food in communities affected by disasters and conflict. Bono, lead singer of the rock band U2, was chosen for his decades of activism to prevent poverty and disease.

Sports legends were also recognized. Earvin "Magic" Johnson—a retired basketball player who led the Los Angeles Lakers to five championships and supports underserved communities through his foundation—received a medal. Lionel Messi, the most decorated player in professional soccer, was selected for his contributions to healthcare and education.

In the field of environmental conservation, world-famous anthropologist Jane Goodall was honored for her trailblazing research on primates and her dedication to protecting natural habitats.

Award-winning actors Michael J. Fox and Denzel Washington were selected for their commitment to improving the world. Fox is a renowned advocate for Parkinson's disease research. Washington has been a spokesperson for the Boys & Girls Clubs of America for more than 25 years.

Other recipients included former US Senator and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, science educator Bill Nye, and fashion designer Ralph Lauren. Medals were also awarded posthumously (after death) to four people, including

former US Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy. "These 19 individuals are great leaders who have made America and the world a better place," the White House said in a statement.



The medal is the nation's highest civilian honor.

## THE WEEK'S SILLIEST HEADLINE

"Tutu-wearing spider monkey rescued by police" *Fox 2 Now*







# Around the world



**Justin Trudeau**  
gives a resignation  
speech.



## **Ottawa, Canada** **Prime minister will step down**

On January 6, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced his plans to resign. Trudeau became prime minister in 2015 and has recently been under pressure from his party and members of the public to step down. In a December 2024 poll, 22% of Canadians said they approved of his leadership. He will stay on as prime minister until his party, the Liberal Party, can find a replacement.



**Edmundo  
González**



## **Caracas, Venezuela** **Reward offered for information**

Venezuela's government has offered a \$100,000 reward for any information that could lead to the arrest of Edmundo González, one of the main candidates in the national election in July 2024. Officials said Nicolás Maduro, who has been president since 2013, won the election. But critics say González received the most votes and should be president. González fled the country in September after authorities ordered his arrest.



**Syrian  
students**



## **Syria** **Changes to school curriculum**

Syria's new government has announced changes to the school curriculum for students ages 6 to 18. Authorities say they have removed information that celebrates President Bashar al-Assad and his government, which ruled Syria from 2000 to 2024. They also made changes to history, language, and religious studies and removed teaching about evolution from science courses.



## **London, United Kingdom** **Teen becomes darts champion**

Luke Littler, a 17-year-old from the UK, has become the youngest person to win the World Darts Championship. The final round was broadcast to about 3 million viewers as Littler beat three-time champion Michael van Gerwen, 7–3, to take the title. "Everyone dreams of lifting this trophy," Littler said afterward. "I can't believe it."



**Luke Littler**



## **Antarctica** **From Chile to chilly**

Gabriel Boric, the president of Chile, went on a two-day journey to the South Pole. Traveling with scientists and other officials, Boric arrived at a US research base in Antarctica, where the South Pole is located, on January 3. He said he visited the pole to support his country's claim that it owns territory in Antarctica. Boric is the third world leader to go to the South Pole and the first to visit it in more than 13 years.



**Gabriel Boric at  
the South Pole**



# Around the world



Venice from the sky



## Venice, Italy Small island appears

Venice, a city built on more than 100 small islands, has a new permanent island. The land, called Bacan and measuring 820 feet by 33 feet, previously emerged from Venice's lagoon in summer, when water levels were low, and vanished in winter. A flood barrier was installed in 2020, and now Bacan can be accessed year-round.



People in Transnistria



## Transnistria, Moldova Low gas supplies lead to blackouts

The Moldovan region of Transnistria has been experiencing power outages after its main supply of gas was cut off. On January 1, Ukraine ended a deal that had allowed gas from Russia to flow through Ukraine to the rest of Europe. This left Transnistria with very little gas, which is used to generate electricity for the region. Transnistria's government introduced blackouts to save as much electricity as possible.



Nuns show off their skills.



## Kathmandu Valley, Nepal Nuns give kung fu performance

On December 30, a group of nuns performed kung fu (a Chinese martial art) to celebrate their religious community reopening to the public. The monastery, which has 300 members, opened in 2009 but was closed to visitors for five years because of the Covid-19 pandemic. "We do kung fu to keep ourselves mentally and physically fit," said nun Jigme Jangchub Chosdon, "and our aim is to promote women's empowerment and gender equality."



A shoreline lit up at night



## Tasmania, Australia Shores glow with natural lights

Tasmania's coast has been lit up by a natural light show known as bioluminescence. Also called sea sparkles, bioluminescence is caused by millions of tiny living organisms called algae that glow in the dark. Scientist Lisa-ann Gershwin described it as "an amazing spectacle" but warned that large-scale events like this are often a sign that something is wrong in the environment.



## Myanmar Prisoners released

On January 4, Myanmar's junta (military group that has taken control of a country by force) announced that it would release about 6,000 prisoners. The junta also said it would reduce the sentences of 144 prisoners from life in prison to 15 years. The day marked the 77th anniversary of the country gaining independence from Britain, and mass releases of prisoners are common on special occasions in Myanmar.



A prisoner and relative reunite.

GETTY IMAGES (4); ALAMY (2); REUTERS (3); JENNY KATZ; BIOLUMINESCENCE TASMANIA





# The big debate

## Should we make New Year's resolutions?

Many people commit to changing parts of their lives starting on January 1.

### What you need to know

- A resolution can be to start or stop doing something, like exercising more, spending less money, or making more time for loved ones.
- A study by Pew Research Center found that 49% of people ages 18 to 29 made at least one resolution for 2024. And 87% of people kept some resolutions for at least a month, while 13% gave them up in a month.
- Another study showed that 88% of people gave up on their resolutions within two weeks.



The start of a new year is a great time to reflect on your life. You can look back on the past 12 months and also think about what you want to accomplish going forward. That's why many people make New Year's resolutions and set goals for themselves, whether that's breaking a habit, making a change, or taking up a hobby. For example, in 2025 you might promise to clean your room more often, start a sticker collection, cook dinner for your family, or hang out more with friends in real life. But other people say these promises only add pressure to our lives. What do you think? Should we make New Year's resolutions?

### Yes—small steps lead to big results

New Year's resolutions help you clarify what you want to accomplish, inspire you to push yourself, and motivate you to get started. Whether your goals are serious or fun, how can that be bad? Starting on January 1 along with everyone else helps you feel like you're part of something bigger. That keeps you accountable and makes you less likely to procrastinate. Besides, resolutions don't have to be pressure-packed. Instead of aiming too high, set yourself up for success by setting achievable goals, broken down into clear steps. If you want to become a more avid runner, commit to running a mile twice a week to start. That's doable!

### No—do it when you're ready

Setting goals is great, but New Year's resolutions aren't the way to do it. They create a lot of pressure, and we can feel bad about ourselves if we don't achieve them. That can have real mental health consequences. Many people set New Year's resolutions because they feel like they're supposed to, not because they want to. You'll be more successful if your goals are truly meaningful and you start when you're ready. And people often think they should set a big goal, like quitting sugar all at once, which is too hard. When we don't reach a goal, it's usually because it's unrealistic, not because we messed up.

YES

### Three reasons we should make New Year's resolutions

- 1 They are a great way to clarify what you want to accomplish and give you the motivation you need to get started.
- 2 When you make a commitment to start working toward goals on a certain date, you're more likely to follow through.
- 3 If you establish specific, achievable goals, you'll set yourself up for success.

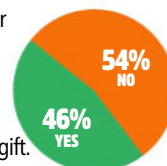
NO

### Three reasons we should not make New Year's resolutions

- 1 They put a lot of pressure on you, and you can feel bad about yourself if you don't achieve them.
- 2 If you set a goal just because it's a new year and everyone else is doing it, you might not be doing it for the right reasons.
- 3 You feel like you have to set huge goals, but that's not a recipe for success.

### OUR PREVIOUS POLL

In Issue 244, we asked you if it is bad manners to regift a present. It was a close vote, with just over half of you saying it's not rude to repurpose a gift.



### What do you think?

Now that you've read a bit more about this issue, visit [kids.theweekjunior.com/polls](https://kids.theweekjunior.com/polls) so you can vote in our debate. Vote **YES** if you think we should make New Year's resolutions or **NO** if you don't. We'll publish the results next week.

The goal of the big debate is to present two sides of an issue fairly in order to stimulate discussion and allow our readers to make up their minds. The views on this page do not reflect those of *The Week Junior*, and the page is not funded by third parties.

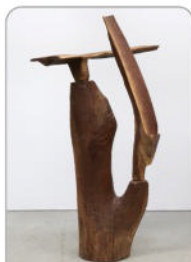




# A long life in art

**Thaddeus Mosley's new exhibit honors his legacy with that of another artist.**

At 98 years old, sculptor Thaddeus Mosley, who has been celebrated for his abstract yet detailed wood sculptures, continues to shine in the art world. His work is currently featured in *Following Space: Thaddeus Mosley and Alexander Calder*, a new exhibit being shown at the Seattle Art Museum in Washington. The exhibit pairs Mosley's wood pieces with the sculptures of famous modern artist Alexander Calder (1898–1976) and is on view through June 1.



**Aero Allegory, created by Thaddeus Mosley in 2018**

Mosley grew up in New Castle, Pennsylvania, outside Pittsburgh, where he now lives and has a studio. After high school, he served in the US Navy before studying English and journalism at the University of Pittsburgh. While in college, Mosley's interest in art was sparked by visits to the nearby Carnegie Museum of Art. As a

sculptor, Mosley is self-taught and honed his skills by engaging with Pittsburgh's art community while working for the US Postal Service. Today, one of his most famous works, *Georgia Gate* (1975), is at the Carnegie Museum.

*Following Space* features 17 sculptures by Mosley that focus on weight, along with five works by Calder, who is famous for his mobiles that move with the air. Mosley first saw Calder's work in the 1950s and has long admired him as "one of the real innovators in the art world," he told *The Week Junior*. Mosley hopes visitors "feel and see how a thing can be stable and not move but still have a feeling of levitation and vitality."

To aspiring young artists, Mosley has this advice: "Have confidence in yourself, [and] see as much art as you can."



**Thaddeus Mosley**

**WOW!**  
One of Thaddeus Mosley's best-known sculptures is the 14-foot-tall *Phoenix* on display outdoors in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

## Teen gets top honor

Sarah Lin, a 17-year-old from Queens, New York, was named a Future Woman of Distinction by the Girl Scouts of Greater New York for her work making movie theaters more accessible to people who are deaf and hard of hearing. When Lin noticed that her mother, who is losing her hearing, stopped going to the movies, Lin founded Theaters Unsilenced. It works with local theaters to offer captioned screenings, hearing devices, and more. It has helped more than 175,000 New Yorkers with hearing loss enjoy movies again.



**Sarah Lin**

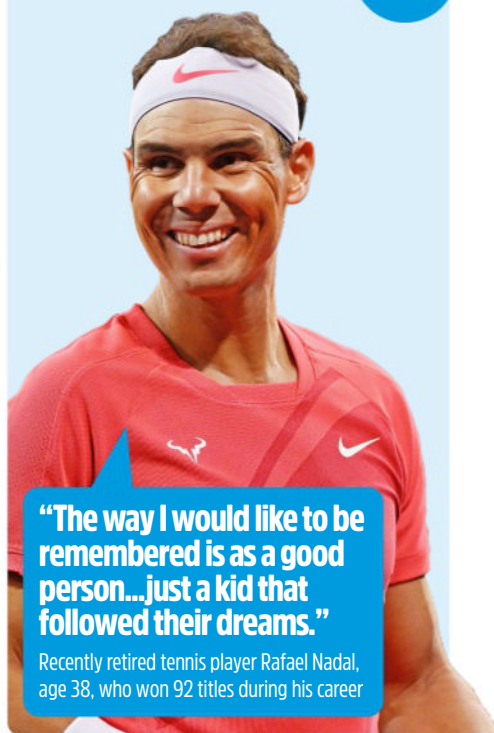


**Chineta Goodjoin**

## Making music for all

Reverend Chineta Goodjoin, the pastor of New Hope Presbyterian Church in Anaheim, California, launched a new orchestra program at her church to support young musicians of color. The program, which requires no auditions or fees, provides mentorship and representation that are often missing in traditional classical music. It now has about 20 members, ages 9 to 20, and includes violin, viola, bass, and cello players. Goodjoin runs the program with her husband, Reggie, the church's music director. Of their mission, she said, "Music is freedom."

## OVERHEARD



**"The way I would like to be remembered is as a good person...just a kid that followed their dreams."**

Recently retired tennis player Rafael Nadal, age 38, who won 92 titles during his career





# Animals and the environment

## MASSIVE MAMMALS

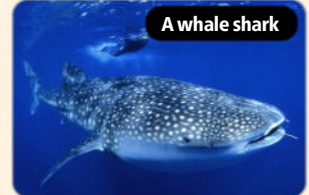
Orcas are the largest members of the dolphin family, weighing up to 6 tons and reaching up to 32 feet in length.



An orca

## Expanding their diet

Orcas have the most varied diet of any whale species. Each group eats specific prey in its habitat, such as seals, fish, or rays. Last year, some orcas were seen hunting dolphins off the coast of Chile, and a pod near Mexico learned to hunt whale sharks, the world's largest living fish.



A whale shark

# Orcas carry salmon on their heads

Fashion trends are said to come and go over the years, and this may be true for orcas as well. Whale watchers and researchers recently spotted a behavior that was previously seen in the 1980s: Some of the whales are sporting dead salmon on top of their heads like a hat.

Last October, a photographer captured a picture of a 33-year-old male orca known as J27, nicknamed "Blackberry," carrying a salmon on its head. Blackberry is a member of an orca population called the southern resident whales, which live off the coast of the Pacific Northwest. Researcher Deborah Giles told NBC News that in early November

she also saw a southern resident whale with a salmon on its head.

The sightings reminded some observers of the year 1987, when a female southern resident orca started wearing a salmon on her head, inspiring members of her pod and two other pods to start doing the same. This behavior is considered an example of orcas participating in a cultural fad (something popular but short-lived). Within a year, the fashion trend appeared to have ended.

Researcher Andrew Foote from the University of Oslo told *New Scientist* it's possible that some orcas who experienced the salmon

hat trend in 1987 have now restarted it. Other scientists, however, say there is not enough evidence to declare that the southern residents are bringing back a decades-old fad. "In my opinion, it's a stretch to say it was a salmon hat," Monika Wieland Shields of the Orca Behavior Institute told CHEK News, "and an even greater stretch to say the fad is back off a single photo."

The reason why orcas carry salmon around is still a mystery to scientists. One possibility is that when plenty of food is available, the creatures like to save an extra fish as a snack for later. The "hats" could also be a way to impress a mate or a silly form of play. Drones equipped with cameras — technology that was not available in 1987 — could help scientists solve this mystery by following the orcas to see what they ultimately do with the salmon.



An orca with a salmon "hat"



## PLACE OF THE WEEK

### Big Bend National Park, Texas

Big Bend National Park is the only national park that encompasses an entire mountain range, the Chisos Mountains. Located in the southwest corner of Texas, near the Mexican border, this 1,252-square-mile park is larger than the state of Rhode Island. Bobcats, black-tailed jackrabbits, and kit foxes can be found in the park, along with more than 450 bird species. The vast desert landscape is also home to several canyons and part of the Rio Grande river. Former First Lady Lady Bird Johnson described the area as looking like "the very edge of the world."



A bobcat





## BUSY BEES

A honeybee can pollinate about 5,000 flowers in a day.



An Ethiopian wolf

## Rare wolves may pollinate plants

Scientists have discovered that wolves in Africa might be pollinating plants. Pollination is the process of transferring powdery pollen grains from one plant to another, which makes it possible for flowering plants to reproduce. Animals that carry the pollen between plants, including bees, birds, and bats, are called pollinators. Until now, scientists had never seen a wolf—or any other large carnivore (meat eater)—doing this.

Ethiopian wolves are the world's rarest wild dog species, with fewer than 500 living

in the wild. A team of scientists followed six of these wolves and saw that they visited fields of red hot poker flowers, a plant found only in Ethiopia. Researcher Sandra Lai said that "as a little treat after hunting their meat meal," the wolves would lick the sweet nectar off the blooms, getting bright yellow pollen on their snouts in the process.

As each wolf visited up to 30 flowers, one after another, they seemed to bring the pollen with them. Scientists still need to do more research to confirm whether the wolves are actually pollinating the plants.

## Animal of the week

## Carnaby's cockatoo



Carnaby's cockatoos are some of the longest-living wild birds, scientists revealed. Researchers studying a colony of the endangered cockatoos found that one bird was at least 35 years old and eight others have lived beyond 21 years.

- **LIFE SPAN:** Up to 35 years, and possibly more
- **HABITAT:** Woodlands in Western Australia
- **SIZE:** About 1 foot, 10 inches
- **DIET:** Seeds, nectar, and insect larvae
- **FUN FACT:** Female Carnaby's cockatoos have white beaks and males have black beaks.

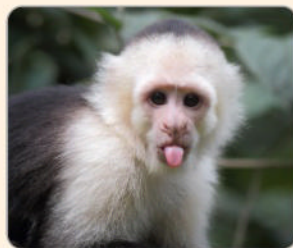


## Good week / Bad week



### Lemurs and tortoises

About 960 endangered lemurs and tortoises were returned to their native Madagascar after people illegally transported them to Thailand. The rescues included radiated tortoises, spider tortoises (above), and brown and ring-tailed lemurs.



### Capuchin monkeys

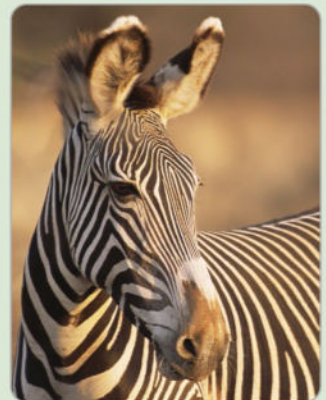
Researchers recently found that rising temperatures caused by climate change have a harmful effect on the immune systems of capuchin monkeys. This may make the monkeys more susceptible to infections and illness.



## "Why do zebras have stripes?" Connor, 8, Pennsylvania

**Mollye Nardi**  
General curator,  
Birmingham Zoo

It was once thought that zebras had stripes to confuse predators. Now researchers believe it helps protect them from biting flies, which do not usually land on striped surfaces. And since black and white absorb and reflect heat differently, another reason could be for temperature control.



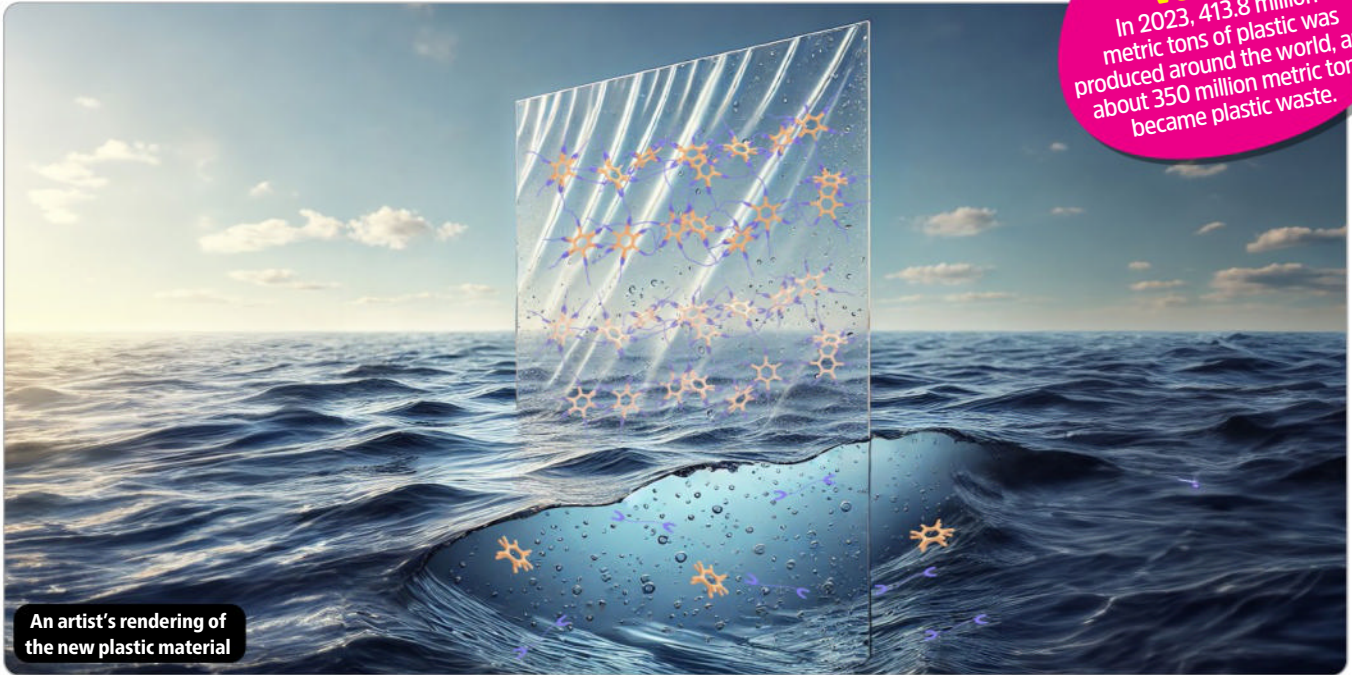
Do you have a question for an animal expert? Send it to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com). Find out more about the Birmingham Zoo at [birminghamzoo.com](http://birminghamzoo.com).





**HIGH VOLUME**

In 2023, 413.8 million metric tons of plastic was produced around the world, and about 350 million metric tons became plastic waste.



An artist's rendering of the new plastic material

## Creating a new type of plastic

From toothbrushes and shampoo bottles to furniture and toys, plastic is used to make many everyday items—but only about 9% of the plastic we use is recycled. The rest is burned or tossed into a landfill. When plastic waste is burned, it releases gases that harm the environment. If it gets thrown away, it often makes its way into the ocean, where it can take hundreds of years to biodegrade (break down) and harms marine wildlife. To help tackle the plastic waste problem, scientists have developed a type of plastic that will break down in seawater.

Biodegradable plastics are ones that break down naturally. Currently, however, existing biodegradable plastics don't break down completely in the sea. Instead, they break up into tiny pieces called microplastics, which are often eaten by fish, birds, and animals. Scientists have predicted that by the year 2050, there will be more plastic in the ocean than fish. Microplastics also end up in our soil, water, and food supplies, eventually making their way into our bodies.

The new plastic could be part of the solution. It was created by researchers at the RIKEN Centre for Emergent Matter Science in

Japan. Unlike other biodegradable plastics, the new plastic fully dissolves in salty seawater. When it dissolves, it breaks up into the separate substances it was made from, and then bacteria (tiny living things) can break those down fully. Tests have shown that the plastic can break down within a few hours in seawater and in about 10 days in soil. The new plastic has other benefits, too.

It is nontoxic (not poisonous) and nonflammable, so it can't easily be burned.

When the new material is heated to a temperature of 248° F, it can be shaped into a variety of forms. It can be customized to have a hard and scratch-resistant surface, turned into flexible rubber objects, or used to manufacture strong items that hold a lot of weight.

The plastic could be used in 3D printing and to create common products, such as medical equipment or single-use packaging. Takuzo Aida, who led the research, said, "With this new material, we have created a new family of plastics that are strong, stable, recyclable, can serve multiple functions, and importantly, do not generate microplastics."



Globally, 1 million plastic bottles are bought every minute.

### What are nurdles?



Small plastic pellets called nurdles (above) are the building blocks of all plastic goods. Made from oil and natural gas, as all plastics are, they look like small beads about the size of a lentil. They are produced by the trillions, shipped around the world, and melted down to become the plastic objects we use. But not all nurdles make it to their destination. Many spill out of ships or trains and end up on land or in the sea.

In 2021, a ship carrying about 75 billion nurdles sank, releasing them into the waters off Sri Lanka. They made their way onto nearby beaches and created a major environmental crisis. Proposed laws to control nurdle manufacturing have been introduced at the state and federal level, and the plastic industry has been working to prevent nurdle leaks.





## Rats who learn to drive are happier

Humans aren't the only animals that like to go for a ride. Scientists who trained rats to drive found that the experience sparked joy in the rodents.

Neuroscientists (scientists who study the brain) at the University of Richmond, in Virginia, taught rats to drive

"cars" made of plastic cereal containers, using cereal as a reward. The rats grabbed a wire to control the vehicle.

Later, they upgraded to robotic rat-operated vehicles (ROVs) with driving levers. The rats eagerly hopped in their ROVs and pressed the lever.

Over time, Kelly Lambert, who led the research, noticed that the driving rats would run up to the side of their cages when she entered the room, like a dog that is excited when its owner comes

home. She wondered whether the rats were anticipating going for a drive and feeling happy about it.

To test that theory, Lambert and her team began making the rats wait 15 minutes before they got cereal and delaying their entry into a play area. Their findings

suggested that the rats who had to wait for a reward developed an optimistic attitude. The anticipation itself was making the animals happy.

Next, the team gave rats the option of walking to the cereal rather than getting in their ROVs and driving to it. Two of three rats chose to get in their ROVs anyway. "This response suggests that the rats enjoy both the journey and the rewarding destination," Lambert said.

**WONDERFUL WHISKERS**  
Rat whiskers have a sense of touch that is more sensitive than human fingers.



A rat steers an ROV—a rat-operated vehicle.



## Lollipop lets you taste virtual food

Gamers may soon be able to use a virtual reality (VR) "lollipop" to taste a snack they see on screen. The handheld lickable device is a prototype (test model) that currently delivers nine different tastes: salty, sugary, sour, passion fruit, green tea, cherry, milk, durian, and grapefruit.

The lollipop has a special gel with food-grade chemicals that create the different flavors. A small electric current triggers the gel to travel to the surface of the lollipop,

carrying whichever chemicals are called for. When the person licks it, the chemicals mix with their saliva, generating the flavor. The device also emits smells to enhance the taste.

Although the technology is being developed for gaming right now, there could be more uses for it in the future. Researchers could use it to help people with an altered sense of taste, or food companies could let people taste a food before buying it, especially when shopping online.



## A treadmill for wheelchair users



The Wheely-X Play

The Wheely-X Play treadmill makes it possible for people who use a wheelchair to exercise and play interactive video games. Users roll up a ramp on the base of the treadmill, where their chair can spin its wheels without moving. Sensors detect the motion of the wheels and

send that information to an app that tracks direction, speed, distance, and other statistics.

Eight games let users race, ski, fly, and kayak in virtual worlds. Wheely-X Play has been used for e-sports tournaments, including one at the 2024 Paralympics in Paris, France.



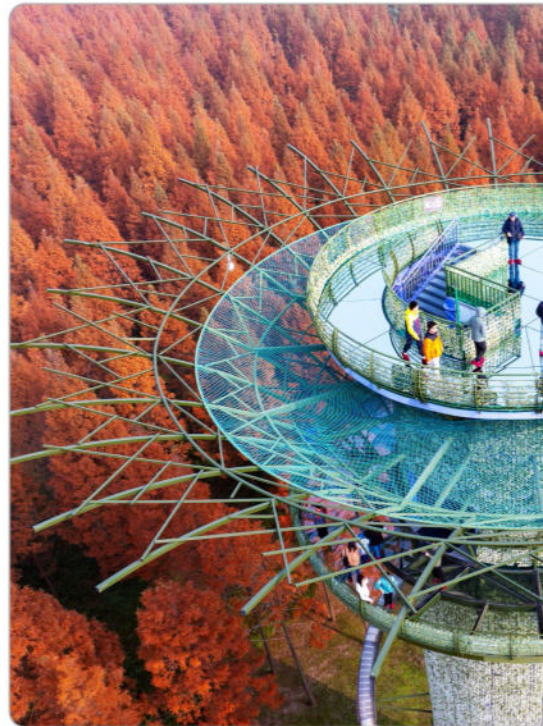


# Photos of the week



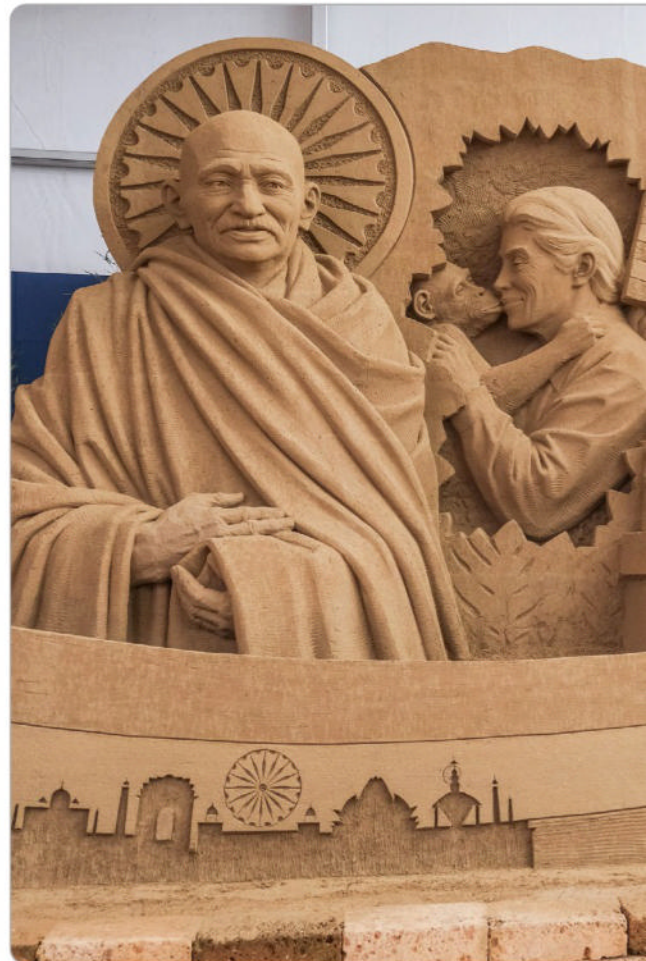
## Looking up

Intricate pillars adorn a new eco-friendly bus station in Poland.



## Amazing art

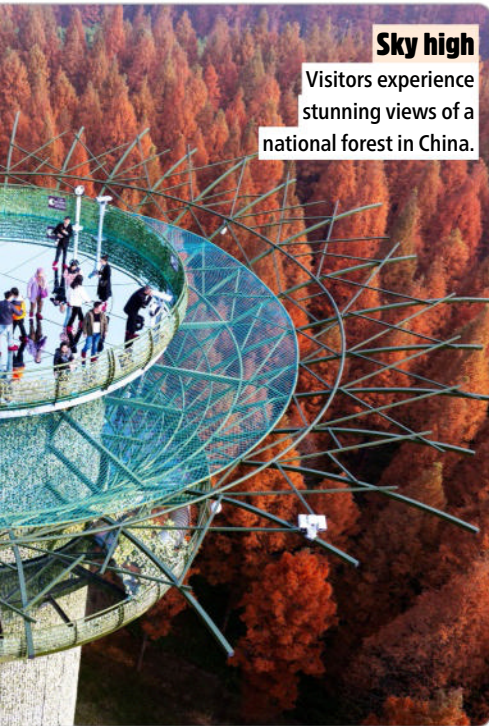
Work by Japanese artist Chiharu Shiota is displayed at an installation in France.



GETTY IMAGES (6)



# Photos of the week



## Sky high

Visitors experience stunning views of a national forest in China.



## Ready to bloom

Lotus flowers grow in a park in Thailand.



## Powerful message

A sand sculpture titled "Universal Brothers and Sisters" was created by a Ukrainian artist in Italy.



## Dazzling design

A mosque in Egypt features the world's heaviest chandelier.





# Sports

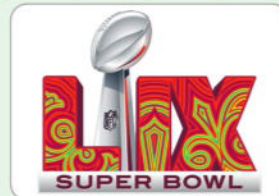
## TUNING IN

Last year, 72 of the 100 most-watched US TV broadcasts were football games.



Sam LaPorta of the Detroit Lions (right) and Josh Metellus of the Minnesota Vikings

## Road to the Super Bowl



The playoffs begin with Wild Card games from January 11 to January 13. Winners move on to the divisional round, held the weekend of January 18, and the Conference Championships take place on January 26. The Super Bowl will be in New Orleans, Louisiana, on February 9.

# Exciting end to NFL regular season

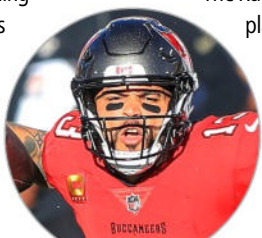
The final games of the 2024–25 NFL (National Football League) regular season took place over the weekend of January 4. Several of them played an important role in determining who made the postseason, as well as the seeds (rankings) in the playoffs.

There are two conferences in the NFL—the NFC (National Football Conference) and the AFC (American Football Conference)—and each one has four divisions (East, West, North, and South). Every division winner makes the playoffs, and the three remaining teams with the best records in each conference earn wild card spots.

Many teams clinched playoff spots before the season-ending Week 18, but three division titles

and one AFC wild card spot were still up for grabs. One of the key games on January 4 was between the Baltimore Ravens and the Cleveland Browns.

The Ravens won, 35–10, to secure first place in the AFC North and the third seed in the playoffs.



Mike Evans

On January 5, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers played the New Orleans Saints. The Bucs, who needed a win or an Atlanta Falcons loss to clinch the NFC South and a playoff spot, erased an early 16–6 deficit and went on to beat the Saints, 27–19. It was a big game for Tampa Bay wide receiver Mike Evans, an 11-year veteran who tied the NFL record for the most consecutive seasons with 1,000 receiving yards.

The Denver Broncos needed a win to clinch the last AFC wild card spot, and they did it with a 38–0 victory over the Kansas City Chiefs. The Chiefs are the number one team in the AFC and already had secured the top spot in the playoffs, so they did not have their stars compete in the game.

The final game on January 5 was a big one between the Minnesota Vikings and the Detroit Lions, two NFC North teams with 14–2 records. Both teams had already made the playoffs, but first place in the NFC North and the number one seed overall was at stake. The Lions led, 10–6, at halftime, then pulled away to win, 31–9. Their running back Jahmyr Gibbs compiled 170 total yards and four touchdowns in the win.

As the top teams in each conference, the Lions and the Chiefs sit out the first week of the playoffs.

## THIS WEEK'S WINNERS...

### HOCKEY

In the final of the 2025 World Junior Championship on January 5, Team USA beat Finland, 4–3, in overtime to earn their second straight world title. Early in the second period, they were down 3–1, but they tied it up before entering the third. Teddy Stiga later scored the winning goal. Team USA captain Ryan Leonard, who had five goals and five assists in the tournament, was named Most Valuable Player.



Team USA

### TENNIS

The United Cup, a tournament with 18 teams of men and women from around the world, ended on January 5 with Team USA as the champions. Singles victories by Americans Taylor Fritz and Coco Gauff helped secure the win.

### GOLF

On January 5, Japan's Hideki Matsuyama won The Sentry, the first PGA tournament of the 2025 season. His total score was 35 under par (the expected score), a new PGA record.





**DID YOU KNOW?**

There are 32 Division 1 conferences in NCAA basketball.



UCLA's Lauren Betts (right) with Indiana's Karoline Striplin

## College hoops is heating up

The new year has brought new excitement to the world of NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) Division 1 basketball. Each team is now playing more opponents from their own conference, creating key matchups as they eye the end of the 2024–25 regular season in March.

Several teams, including three women's teams in the Big 10 Conference, began 2025 with undefeated records. One of them was UCLA (the University of California, Los Angeles), the top team in the country. On January 4, they beat the University of Indiana, 73–62, to move to 15–0 for the season. UCLA center Lauren Betts led the way with 25 points and 12 rebounds.

There was a thrilling SEC (Southeastern Conference) women's game on January 5 between 15th-ranked University of Tennessee, which

entered undefeated, and ninth-ranked University of Oklahoma. Tennessee was down by 16 points heading into the fourth quarter but made a big comeback. However, after their forward Sara Puckett missed what would have been a game-winning shot, Oklahoma won, 87–86.

In SEC men's action, top-ranked Tennessee continued its excellent start to the season with a conference-opening game on January 4. They beat 23rd-ranked Arkansas, 76–52, to improve to 14–0. Tennessee's Chaz Lanier had 29 points. In other SEC games that day, 10th-ranked Kentucky handed sixth-ranked Florida its first loss of the season, with a 106–100 win, while 12th-ranked Oklahoma dropped to 13–1 after losing to fifth-ranked Alabama, 107–79. Mark Sears scored 22 points and dished out 10 assists in the win.



## COACH OF THE WEEK

Coach's Name: **Luke O'Connor**

Team: **LA United Football Club (soccer)**

**"Coach Luke is an amazing coach and such an optimist. When we're losing, he tells us to keep our heads up, pretend the score is 0–0, and we can still win. At training, he always has a smile and tries to make drills fun and challenging. He has so much belief and faith in me, always tries to make me feel valued, and has given me more confidence. His motto is 'Get a bit better every single training session and you'll be great in the game.'"** Hendrix, 11, California



To nominate a Coach of the Week, send your coach's name, photo, sport, and team to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com). Include your name, age, state, and a few reasons why your coach is great.

## SPOTLIGHT ON...



## Chloe Chicoine

AGE: 20 SPORT: VOLLEYBALL  
TEAM: PURDUE UNIVERSITY

**Family history** I began playing volleyball in elementary school. My mom played in college, so she kind of pushed me. I was a little uncoordinated at first, but after a few years, I learned to love it and got better. I think individual sports are so hard. Being part of a team takes pressure off and is really fun.

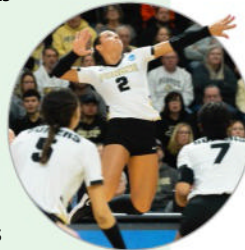
**Quick thinking** Volleyball is fast-paced, and there are many different skills you can get good at. I like that my position, outside hitter, does them all. It keeps you on your toes.

**Smart mindset** Losses are hard, but our season moves so fast. After a disappointing performance, it's easy to use that fuel to get back to work and continue to get better. When you're winning, it's hard to learn things because you think you're doing so well, even if you really aren't. I think losses are a blessing in disguise to show us what we need to work on.

**Major moments** My top accomplishment is being at Purdue and making the national championship tournament with my team this year and last year. We haven't accomplished everything we want to do yet, but continuing to make the tournament is a really big deal.

**Next goals** I'd like to play volleyball as long as I can. You used to have to go overseas, but now there are opportunities in the US, like League One Volleyball and the Pro Volleyball Federation. I also wouldn't mind trying beach volleyball.

**Wise words** Everybody's probably going to be pretty bad at something when they first start. Stick with it, and learn to have fun as you grow.





A damselfly (left) and a hibiscus harlequin bug in *A Real Bug's Life*

**LIVING LARGE**

About 80% of the animal species in the world are insects.



## Series about insects returns

A new season of *A Real Bug's Life* delivers an up-close look at amazing little creatures and their incredible worlds.

Last year, National Geographic released *A Real Bug's Life*, a TV series that drew viewers into the lives of insects. The show, which was recently nominated for a Children's & Family Emmy Award (top honor in television), is returning on January 15 with five new episodes on Disney+. It is narrated by actress, rapper, and comedian Awkwafina (real name: Nora Lum).

*A Real Bug's Life* was inspired by Disney and Pixar's animated movie *A Bug's Life*, a comedy adventure set in the insect world. The first four episodes of the new season focus on insects that live at the beach, in ponds,

in forests, and in Australia. The fifth one is about how the series was made.

Tim Cockerill, a zoologist who worked on the series, told *The Week Junior* that insects' worlds are "so diverse and so complex." He said their lives include "fascinating stories of the ways they're trying to find food, a partner, a safe place to live, or somewhere to raise their family."



Tim Cockerill

One of his favorite insects in the series is a peacock spider, which has a colorful flap that it shakes to attract a mate. The show also highlights a tiger beetle, which is known for its speed and had never been filmed before. Cockerill said one of the most

memorable parts of working on the series occurred during filming in a Costa Rican rainforest, when he woke up to "thousands and thousands" of army ants making their way through his hut. "It turned out to be the best day of the entire shoot because I got to see this thing happening without even having to leave my bedroom," he said.

Cockerill hopes the series helps people appreciate the bugs around them. "Whether you live in the middle of a rainforest, on a farm, or in the middle of the city, there is always something to look at," he said. "Just pay attention to those tiny things moving around. If you take the time to look at them, you realize that they're usually doing something absolutely fascinating."

### 3 creatures in the show

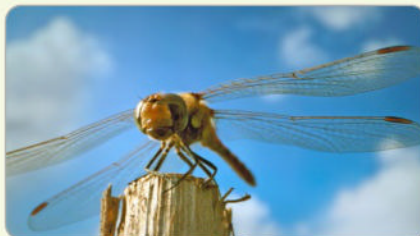


#### Fiddler crab

The females of this beach-dwelling species have two claws of equal size, but the males have a tiny one and a large one, which they use for defense and to attract mates. If the crab loses the big claw, the small one grows bigger.

#### Dragonfly

During the larva stage, these insects live underwater. Once they surface as adults, they survive for six to eight weeks at most. Dragonflies, which rest with their wings spread out, are one of the fastest flying insects.



#### Botany Bay weevil

This type of beetle, also known as a diamond beetle, is covered in shimmering scales. The species lives in and on acacia trees in Australia. It was first collected on an expedition to the area in 1770.





## POSTAL STARS

In 2010, Wallace and Gromit were featured on 600 million Christmas stamps in the UK.



Wallace & Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl



## THIS WEEK'S WATCH LIST



### The Dragon Prince: Mystery of Aaravos (Netflix)

In the final set of episodes for the current chapter of this show, the heroes must unite forces of good, uncover mysteries, and prepare to confront evil Aaravos before he plunges the world into darkness and unleashes the spirits of the dead.



### All Creatures Great and Small (PBS App) (PBS.org) (PBS)

The beloved series based on best-selling books by James Herriot, an English veterinarian, is back for a new season. It begins in 1941 with James returning home from serving in the UK's Royal Air Force and rejoining his team as they navigate wartime life while caring for animals.



### StuGo (Disney Channel) January 11 at 8 p.m. ET

This new animated series follows six middle schoolers who are overachievers. After a mad scientist tricks them into attending a fake academic summer camp on a tropical island, they end up on a wild adventure that includes mind-reading manatees and thieving mutants.

# Famous duo has a new film

Two classic stop-motion animation characters are starring in their first feature-length film in more than 16 years. Wallace, a quirky inventor, and his clever dog, Gromit, are back in *Wallace & Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl*, an action-comedy from Aardman, the animation studio that created the *Shaun the Sheep* and *Chicken Run* films. The film was recently released on Netflix and was nominated for a Golden Globe (top entertainment award) for best animated motion picture.

Wallace and Gromit, who are made of clay, were created by British animator Nick Park. They have starred in shorts, TV specials, and a film that won an Oscar (top film award). The stories often revolve around Wallace's backfiring inventions and Gromit saving the day. In *Vengeance Most Fowl*, Wallace makes a "smart gnome," Norbot, to help with gardening,

and it makes Gromit feel like Wallace doesn't need him. To make things worse, Norbot ends up being controlled by penguin Feathers McGraw, one of Wallace and Gromit's past enemies.

The film, directed by Park and Merlin Crossingham, was shot on more than 40 miniature sets. Only 127 seconds of animation were produced each week because stop-motion animation involves moving models in tiny increments and photographing them after each movement. The directors preserved the franchise's handmade style but used 3D printing for Norbot's head and some computer-generated effects.

Park told IndieWire the film's story asks the question, "How much does tech enhance our human experience, or how much does it diminish it?" It helps Wallace and Gromit see each other in new ways, he said, and "both learn something."



Merlin Crossingham (left) and Nick Park



## READER RECOMMENDS

### The Great British Baking Show: Juniors (Netflix)

"I love this spin-off of *The Great British Baking Show*. It is like the version for adults and masters but for kids. It features young contestants who are very good at baking, and in each episode, they have to do challenges such as baking a cake, a biscuit, or an elaborate dessert. The music playing while they are baking in the background is very relaxing, and the show itself is interesting. It is inspiring to see kids like me baking, and it makes me want to bake and cook more! I have even learned a lot of baking skills from watching the kids' experiences on the show." Eleanor, 11, Nebraska



Do you have a film or TV show to recommend to other kids? Send your review to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com).





## On screen



# Future emojis under review

The list of emojis available to people on their phones, computers, and smart devices continues to expand. This year, characters being rolled out include a fingerprint, a harp, and a splatter. Recently, a new batch of emojis went under review for potential release in 2026.

The organization in charge of choosing characters and designs is the Unicode Consortium. Its Unicode Emoji Subcommittee has proposed a total of 164 new emojis featuring nine new designs. They include an orca, an apple core, a treasure chest, a landslide, a trombone, a ballet dancer, and a hairy Bigfoot-like creature. There is also a “fight cloud,” which is a puff with a lot of action around it, as well as a face with bulging eyes—ideal for reacting to wild or unexpected news.



Changes to existing emojis also have been proposed. They would expand the variety of skin tones for pairs of wrestlers and people with bunny ears and would allow both people to have the same or different skin tones. The new ballet dancer would also be available in different skin tones.

Anyone from around the world can submit a concept for an emoji, but only ones that are seen as relevant or useful to millions of people are released. Companies such as Apple and Google make their own versions of emojis for their devices and websites, so designs look different depending on the platform. The committee will announce its approved list in September, and more ideas could be added before then. If the new batch is approved, there would be more than 3,900 emojis.



### GAME OF THE WEEK

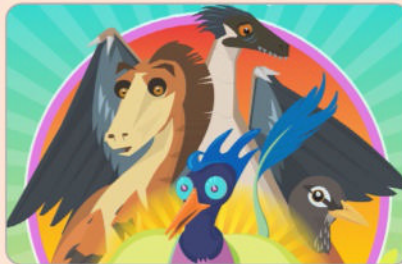
#### SNOW BROS. WONDERLAND

PlayStation, Nintendo Switch

For decades, this video game brought the fun of snowball fights indoors in 2D, and now it has been updated with 3D animation for a more immersive feel. Up to four players can use an endless supply of ice pellets to defeat monsters with snowballs and protect Snow Land from an evil king.



### WEBSITE OF THE WEEK



#### FLAP TO THE FUTURE

[tinyurl.com/TWJUS-BirdFlap](https://tinyurl.com/TWJUS-BirdFlap)

Cornell University's Lab of Ornithology (study of birds) created this fun site to explain how birds developed the ability to fly. You begin 200 million years ago as a feathered dinosaur and progress through levels as different species, unlocking abilities such as climbing, flapping, and flight.



### APP OF THE WEEK

#### NINTENDO MUSIC

Apple App Store, Google Play

Nintendo's new app lets you stream soundtracks and download tracks from games such as Super Mario Bros. and Animal Crossing. It also offers playlists based on genre, characters, and other themes. There is a spoiler-prevention option to block music from games you haven't played yet.





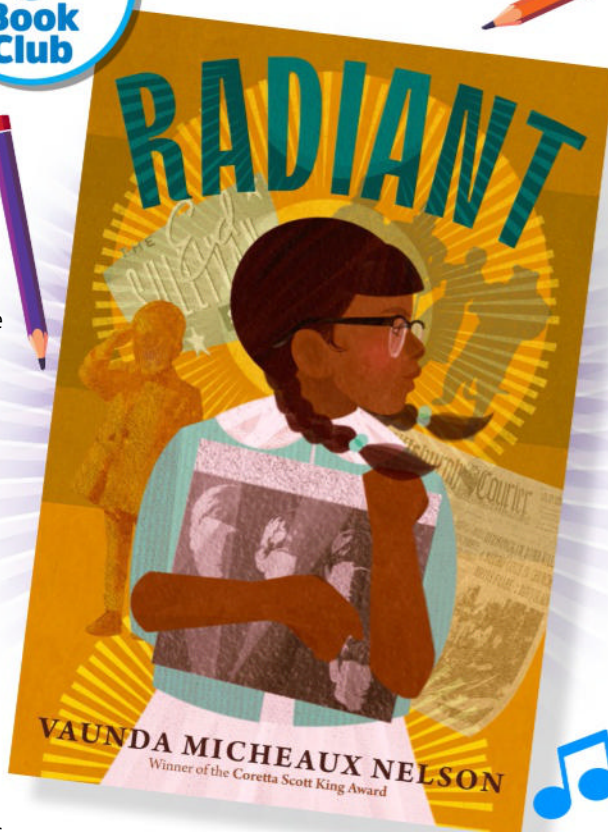


OUR JANUARY  
BOOK CLUB PICK

## Radiant

By Vaunda Micheaux Nelson  
(Dutton Children's Books)

In this novel written in verse, set in 1963, Cooper is the only Black student in her fifth-grade class. She often tells her siblings that she wishes she were white so her life would be easier. For example, Cooper's classmate, Wade, has bullied her since they were in second grade. This year, his desk is next to hers. He's mean and even makes racist remarks to her. Their teacher, who has a reputation for being strict, never catches Wade in the act. But she punishes Cooper for coloring in a library book and gives her a failing grade on a spelling test because of her penmanship. When asked about her parents' jobs, Cooper lies and says her mother is a home decorator. She thinks Wade would make more fun of her if he knew her mom was a housekeeper. But Wade finds out the truth when his mother gets sick and his family hires Cooper's mom to help. As Wade's mother grows increasingly ill, Cooper struggles with whether to be kind to Wade. The conclusion is dramatic. A subplot about Cooper and her sister bonding over music by the Beatles lightens the book's heavier themes.



### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR YOUR BOOK CLUB

A poetic story that takes place during a single school year, *Radiant* explores big issues such as race, fairness, and friendships. Here are questions to get a conversation going with friends and family who have also read the book.

**Is *Radiant* a good title for the book? What's another possible title?**

**What did you think of Cooper's teacher?**

**What could Cooper's classmates have done to help her?**

**Do you think you would have been able to forgive Wade?**

**What's the most important thing Cooper learned about herself in fifth grade?**

**How does Wade change from the beginning to the end of the story?**

**How does Cooper's story benefit from being told in verse?**

## WIN A BOOK!

We're giving away one signed copy of *Radiant*.

For a chance to win, send your name and address to [contests@theweekjunior.com](mailto:contests@theweekjunior.com) with *Radiant* in the subject line. Enter by midnight on January 31. See [theweekjunior.com/terms](http://theweekjunior.com/terms) for complete rules.



## Ask the author



Vaunda Micheaux Nelson is an award-winning writer of children's books for kids of all ages, from early readers to young adults. *Radiant* is her first novel in verse. *The Week Junior* spoke to her about what inspired her to create it and her path to writing it.

### Did the idea for *Radiant* stem from your childhood?

Like Cooper, I am Black and attended a primarily all-white school, and it did cross my mind that life would be easier if I were white. But I am grateful for my experiences because ultimately I came to a place where I feel like I can fit in anywhere.

### When did you start writing?

I began writing when I was 9 or 10—but it wasn't always stories. For example, I wrote songs to play on the guitar. After college, I worked in journalism and then as a children's librarian. I've been writing full-time since 2018.



### What motivated you to write a novel in verse?

*Radiant* started as a single poem that I wrote 10 years ago. I put it away in a drawer and didn't revisit what I wrote until 2020.

### What do you hope kids take away from the story?

I hope kids find ways to feel comfortable with who they are and know that everybody has their own ways of shining.

### What books do you enjoy most?

I like stories that are character-driven. What's memorable for me about a book is my connection with the people in it.

### Are you a fan of the Beatles?

Yes, I remember Beatlemania vividly. It was fun looking back on the popularity of the band in the 1960s while writing the book.

### Favorite winter beverage?

Herbal tea with honey and lemon.







## How to...

# Share your hopes for America

As the US prepares to swear in its next President, be inspired by these historic words from past inaugurations.

On Inauguration Day on Monday, January 20, Donald Trump will be sworn into office as the 47th President of the United States. (Trump was also the 45th President, from 2017 to 2021.) Since George Washington in 1789, US Presidents have delivered an important speech called an inaugural address. The new President often uses the address to express their vision for the future of America. At past inaugurations, guest speakers have also shared

inspiring words. Please see below for a selection of famous quotes from past Presidential inaugurations.

As a reader of *The Week Junior*, you may have thoughts about America's future. We invite you to use the form at right to write them down. You can do this for yourself—or, if you'd like to share your form with *The Week Junior*, ask an adult to email it to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com). Extra forms can be found at [kids.theweekjunior.com/activities](https://kids.theweekjunior.com/activities).

**"Here, on the pulse of this new day, you may have the grace to look up and out and into your sister's eyes, and into your brother's face, your country and say simply, very simply with hope—good morning."**

—Poet Maya Angelou, Bill Clinton's 1993 inauguration

**"Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country."**

—John F. Kennedy, 1961

**"We have every right to dream heroic dreams. Those who say that we're in a time when there are not heroes, they just don't know where to look."**

—Ronald Reagan, 1981

**"When day comes, we step out of the shade, aflame and unafraid. The new dawn blooms as we free it. For there is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it."**

—Poet Amanda Gorman, Joe Biden's 2021 inauguration

**"I do not fear what is ahead. For our problems are large, but our heart is larger. Our challenges are great, but our will is greater."**

—George H. W. Bush, 1989

**"On this day, we gather because we have chosen hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict and discord."**

—Barack Obama, 2009





# How to...



First name

Age

State

What do you love most about America and why?

If you could describe America in three words, which words would you choose?

What are some of the hopes you have for our country in 2025 and in the future?

Draw a picture of what America looks like to you.

By submitting this form to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com), you give *The Week Junior* consent to print it in the magazine and online. Please get your guardian or parent's permission before sending anything to us.





# Puzzles



## Crisscross

Each of these parts of a car fits into this grid. Can you find where each one goes to complete the grid?

**4 letters**

GEAR  
HORN  
LOCK

**5 letters**

DOORS  
TRUNK

**6 letters**

ENGINE  
LIGHTS  
MIRROR  
PISTON

**7 letters**

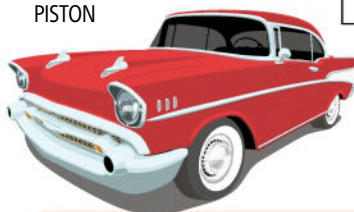
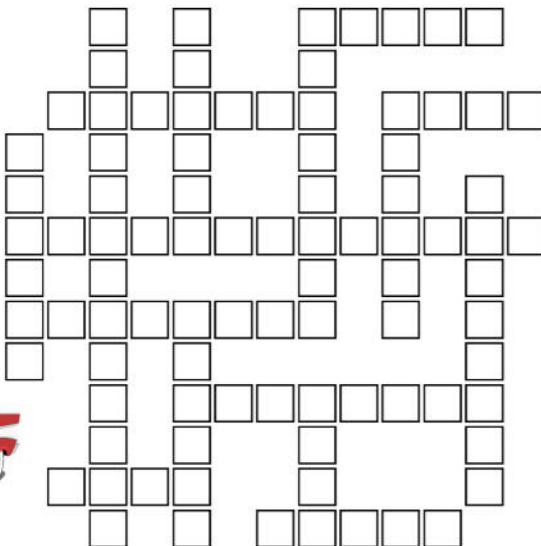
SUNROOF

**8 letters**

DEFOGGER  
GAS GAUGE  
ODOMETER  
SEAT BELT

**13 letters**

CRUISE CONTROL  
STEERING WHEEL



## Take five

Five 5-letter kinds of birds are hidden in this grid. For each one, the first letter is somewhere in the first column, the second is somewhere in the second column, and so on. Can you find all five?

S	U	N	A	T
F	A	R	I	K
Q	G	O	E	W
M	I	C	R	H
E	T	A	C	L

## ALL THE SAME

Each answer contains the letters A-G-O. Those letters have been placed for you. Can you figure out the words? (NEED A HINT? Check the bottom of the page.)

1. Vehicle pulled by horses in the Old West

A G O

2. Big city in Illinois known as the Windy City

A G O

3. Tower with many levels seen in Asian cities

A G O

4. Shape of a stop sign

A G O

5. Jewish temple

A G O

ANSWERS  
CAN BE  
FOUND ON  
PAGE 29.

## SUDOKU

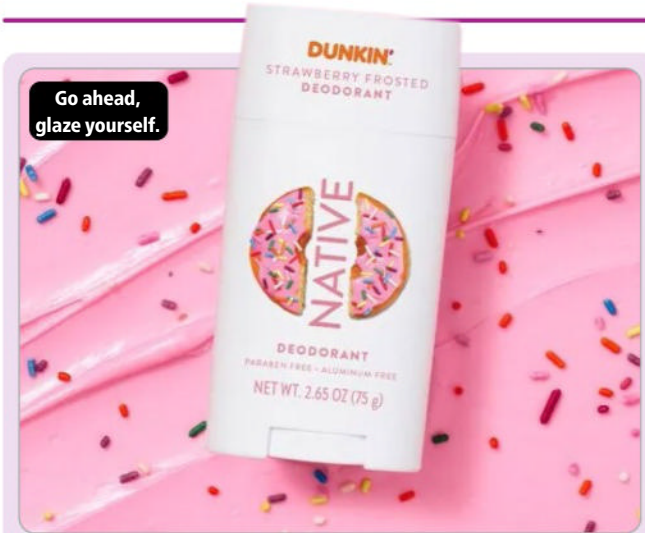
To complete the grid, place the numbers from 1 to 6 exactly once in each row, column, and 2x3 bold-lined box.

	1	2			5
5			1		
6				3	
	3				2
		6			4
1			2	5	

## Spot the difference

These two pictures of zebras appear to be the same, but take a closer look. There are actually five differences. Can you see them?





Go ahead,  
glaze yourself.

## Bathe in the scent of donuts

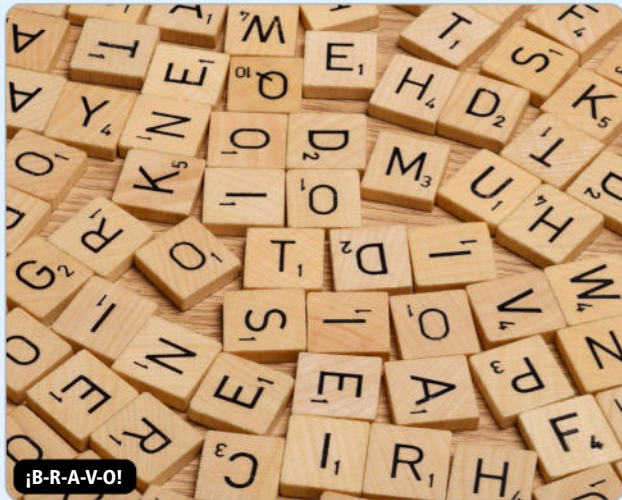
The beauty brand Native recently banded together with Dunkin' restaurants to create a "hole" new line of donut-inspired body care products. Now customers can sprinkle some sweetness into their daily routines with classic scents like Boston Kreme, strawberry frosted, and blueberry cobbler. The aromas are available in limited editions of Native's deodorant, body wash, and lotion, as well as bottles of shampoo and conditioner. One social media user said, "Do people want to smell like a donut or cookie? I think they actually do."



He was really  
on a roll.

## Man skates across America

Chad Caruso crossed the US with nothing but a backpack and a skateboard. It took him 57 days, 6 hours, and 56 minutes to skate 3,162 miles from Venice Beach, California, to Virginia Beach, Virginia. Caruso wore out his shoes as he skated 10 hours a day through deserts, highways, and plains in all kinds of weather. But achieving a world record while also raising awareness about mental health made the journey worth it. "If you have a vision, believe in bringing it to life," he said.



iB-R-A-V-O!

## A game-changing Scrabble win

Last month, Nigel Richards defeated about 150 competitors to win the Spanish World Scrabble Championships—even though he doesn't speak any Spanish. The New Zealand man has been playing the word game competitively in English for nearly 30 years, racking up at least five titles. He pulled off his latest feat by studying a Spanish Scrabble dictionary, memorizing the word list in about a year. In 2015, Richards similarly won the French championship after nine weeks of study. "He's a phenomenon," said fellow world champion Eric Salvador Tchouyo.

Real or  
fake?



How skinny  
is it?

## Scientists spin thin spaghetti

Researchers have created the world's skinniest spaghetti, which is about 200 times thinner than a strand of human hair. Called "nanopasta," it is made by mixing flour and liquid, then twirling them into very thin strands using a process called electrospinning. Although it has similar ingredients to regular pasta, it's not designed to be eaten. Instead, according to a professor at University College London in the UK, the strands have potential medical uses, such as for dressing wounds. Is this story real, or have we spun a lie?\*

\*Real! The nanofibers could be woven into bandages that would keep dirt and germs out of a wound but allow moisture in. The professor said, "I don't think it's useful as pasta, sadly, because it would overcook in less than a second."





# Your turn

## Editor's note

In this issue, our first of 2025, we pay tribute to Jimmy Carter, the former US President who died on December 29 at age 100. He led a remarkable life. After growing up in a house in Georgia that had no electricity, Carter attended the Naval Academy, became a state politician, and set his sights on the Presidency. He was elected to that office in 1976 and served one term. Carter will be remembered most, however, for what he did after that. He returned to the modest home where he had lived before moving to the White House and devoted himself to humanitarian causes for the next 40 years. He represented, one US lawmaker said, a "consciousness of caring." You can find out more about his life, the reaction to his death, and the services honoring him in our special four-page section starting on page 2. We join the nation and the world in expressing gratitude for the example he set, the difference he made, and the legacy he leaves.



Andrea Barbalich  
Editorial Director



Will, 9, with  
Noah, 7, California

## The joy of helping others

“When I was getting ice cream one day, I saw a sign for a nonprofit that works with children in foster care. We reached out to the group and asked how we could help. They said we could collect stuffed animals and books for them to hand out to children during the group’s holiday party. We created a flyer and then went to a printing shop to get 200 copies made. We passed out the flyers to our

neighbors and local businesses. When we got our first donation, we were so proud and motivated. After that, we decided to have a bake sale, which helped raise \$800. We used the money to buy more stuffies and books, bringing the total number of donations to 434 books and 163 stuffies. We were so delighted that we did all this for other people.”

**Have you done something interesting or raised money for a cause you care about? Whatever you're up to, we want to hear about it at [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com).**

**RIDDLE OF THE WEEK**  
Who can shave 20 times a day and still have a beard?  
A barber

## CHARITY OF THE WEEK



### One Tree Planted

This organization has a goal of making it easy for people to help the planet. For every dollar donated, one tree gets planted. Trees help clean the air, remove pollution from water, and provide homes for animals. Since 2014, the group has planted more than 135.5 million trees in North America, Africa, Asia, and Latin America and helped restore more than 292,000 acres of forest. Find out more at [onetreepanted.org](http://onetreepanted.org).

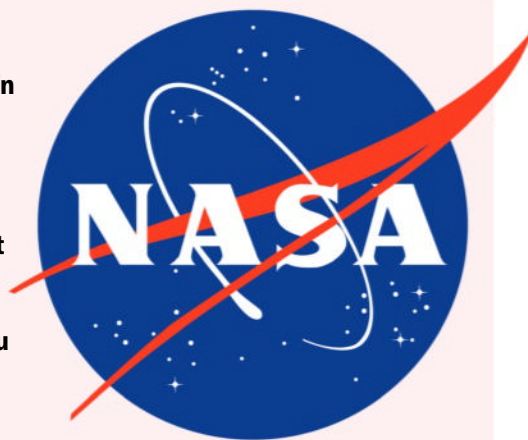


ONETREEPLANTED



## NATIONWIDE CONTEST OPPORTUNITY

NASA, the US space agency, has launched its fourth annual Power to Explore Student Challenge. Students in grades K–12 are invited to write an essay about their idea for a nuclear-powered mission to a moon in the solar system. Essays should include details on where they would go, what they would explore, and how they would use radioisotope power systems, a type of nuclear battery. You can find out more about the contest, including when and how to apply, at [tinyurl.com/TWJUS-NASAcontest](http://tinyurl.com/TWJUS-NASAcontest).



THE WEEK  
Junior

IT'S YOUR TURN

Email your news, views, and photos to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com).



## YOUR PHOTOS

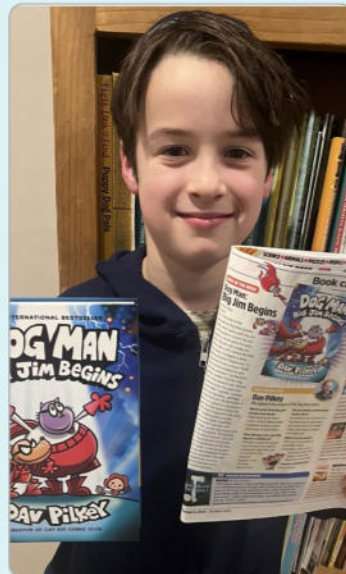
We'd love to see pictures you've taken or pictures with you in them! Have an adult email them to us at [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com), along with anything you would like us to know about what's happening in the photo.



"Reading *The Week Junior* is our weekend routine."

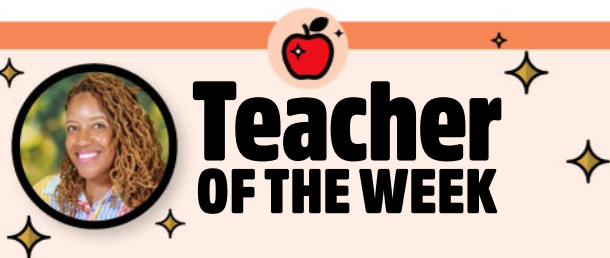
Aaron, 13, with Brandon, 7, New York

"As soon as we read the recipe for the apple pie smoothie, we knew we had to make it. It was delicious!" Jonah, 11, Mina, 8, with Remi, 5, Rhode Island



"I got the new Dog Man book to read with my brother. Thanks for recommending it!"

Jack, 8, Pennsylvania



Teacher's Name: **Ms. Hutchins**

School: **Phoebe Hearst Elementary School**

"My math teacher, Ms. Hutchins, is the best teacher ever! She makes us all feel so supported and loved. In class, she does fun things, like organizing mini competitions. Ms. Hutchins is patient, kind, and just amazing. I love the positive energy she brings to the classroom, and all of my classmates do too."

Katherine, 10, Washington, DC

**Nominate your teacher for Teacher of the Week!**

**Send your reason for the nomination, a photo of your teacher, and your school's name and address to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com).**

## Puzzle answers (from page 26)

C M I D O O R S  
S U N R O O F L O C K  
P I S T O L G G S  
S T E E R I N G W H E E L  
T C E T A  
O D O M E T E R S  
N N N G A S G A U G E  
R I L E  
H O R N A T  
L E T R U N K

### Take five

stork  
finch  
quail  
macaw  
egret

### All the same

1. wagon  
2. Chicago  
3. pagoda  
4. octagon  
5. synagogue

3	1	2	6	4	5
5	6	4	1	2	3
6	2	5	4	3	1
4	3	1	5	6	2
2	5	6	3	1	4
1	4	3	2	5	6



## Quiz answers (from page 30)

1 Feathers McGraw 2 True 3 a) Salmon 4 a) Detroit Lions 5 Wood 6 False. The experience made the rats happy. 7 b) Fifth 8 b) 202 9 a) Bigfoot 10 A Bug's Life 11 b) Magic Johnson 12 False. They are the rarest. 13 Seawater 14 True 15 c) Skateboard

We want to hear from you! To have your letters, photos, nominations, recommendations, or ideas considered for inclusion in the magazine, please include your first name, age, and state with your submission. By emailing your submission to us, you give *The Week Junior* consent to publish it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending anything to us.





# Quiz

## How much of this week's news can you remember?

**1** In the new movie *Wallace & Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl*, who takes control of Wallace's robot?



**2** True or false? Jimmy Carter won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.

True ☐ False ☐

**3** Orcas in the Pacific Northwest have recently been seen carrying what on their heads?

a) Salmon b) Shrimp c) Starfish

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

**4** Which team won the final game of the NFL's regular season?

a) Detroit Lions  
b) Minnesota Vikings  
c) Pittsburgh Steelers

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

**5** Thaddeus Mosley is an artist who makes sculptures out of what material?



**6** True or false? Scientists who trained rats to drive found that the experience made the rodents unhappy.

True ☐ False ☐

**7** In the new book *Radiant*, what grade is Cooper in?

a) Second b) Fifth c) Seventh

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

**8** How many dog breeds does the American Kennel Club now recognize?

a) 122 b) 202 c) 212

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐



**9** Which fantastical creature is one of the new emojis being considered for 2026?

a) Bigfoot  
b) Dragon  
c) Unicorn

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

**10** What animated movie inspired the new show *A Real Bug's Life*?

**11** Which famous basketball player recently received the Presidential Medal of Freedom?

a) Larry Bird  
b) Magic Johnson  
c) Michael Jordan

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

**12** True or false? Ethiopian wolves are the most common wild dog species in the world.

True ☐ False ☐

**13** Scientists in Japan have made a new kind of plastic that breaks down in a few hours when it is put in what?

**14** True or false? Sarah Lin, age 17, is making movie theaters more accessible for people who are deaf and hard of hearing.

True ☐ False ☐

**15** Chad Caruso traveled across the US on what kind of vehicle?

a) Bicycle  
b) Scooter  
c) Skateboard

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

ANSWERS  
CAN BE  
FOUND ON  
PAGE 29.

## THE WEEK Junior

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**Account director:** Mary Gallagher ([mary.gallagher@futurenet.com](mailto:mary.gallagher@futurenet.com))  
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**Reader submissions:** [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com)  
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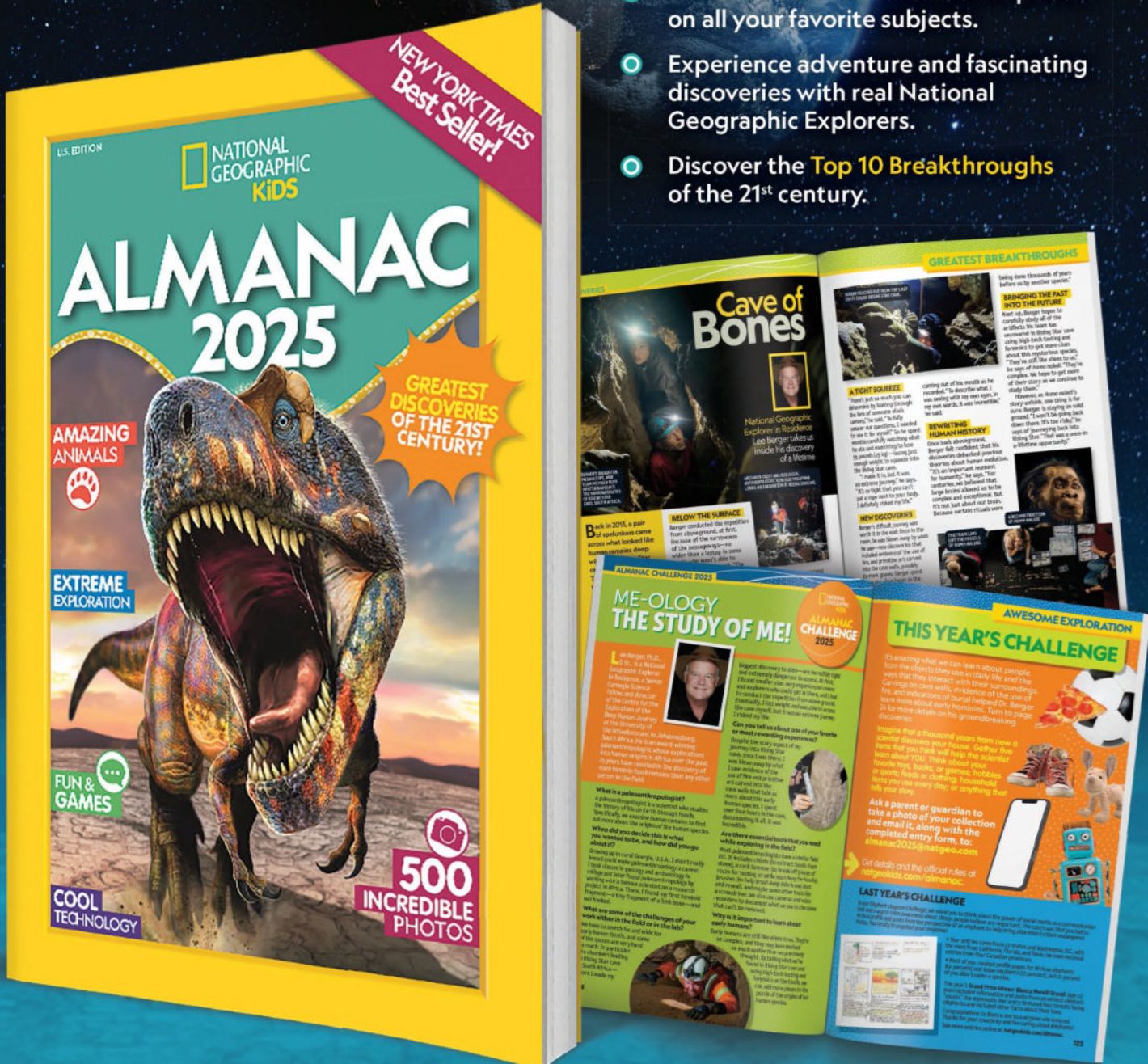
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